

IN NOMINE IESU

Beloved Saints of Christ, your King,

“Do you have a will written? How about a Trust document? You know, you need to be prepared to protect your spouse, your children, to provide for your church... you need to get those documents in order because, well... you never know what may and will happen!” No, I’m not trying to sell you insurance and I’m no financial advisor. However, I do want to offer you the full riches of heaven, namely, the forgiveness of sins found solely in the Body and Blood of Jesus!

As we are just one week away from the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem where He would become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, our Old Testament lesson and our Gospel shake hands to reveal, to gift you with something so special.

Jeremiah, a prophet whose name means, “One called by God” tells the people that something new is coming, not a two-way contract or covenant, like earthly marriage, where both the husband and the wife pledge their troth, their faithfulness, yet where unfaithfulness and mistrust all too often come. Divorce is real, for we, the Bride, the Church, we always sin, we always fall, we always fail... this side of heaven.

This cannot stand! This will not be the result! The Holy God who promised at the first sin in that beautiful garden, that He would set things right, that He would offer His own Son, the One who crushes the head of the serpent!

So, a New Covenant, actually a Testament... a will, a New Last Will and Testament must be drawn up. Not where both parties do something mutually for one another.

No! Here is the New Testament... listen to the legal language, the commitment: “I, that is, YHWH, God Almighty, will actually put my Law in your heart, I will declare you to be My people...” note the possessive pronoun, “My” – He owns us, calls us, redeems us, cherishes us.... “And I will be your God! Your deliverer, not just from sin but to me as my beloved!”

Does this remind you of the opening words to the Ten Commandments? Just a couple of weeks ago we had these words from Exodus 20:2, *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery*. The relationship named is that of deliverer from death to life, of Benevolent One to His beloved!

God acts, God gives, yes, and God ALONE saves! We **receive**
and in that reception of grace and salvation
we give thanks and reflect His goodness!

Behold His goodness, His complete Goodness in our Gospel: For the third and final time in Mark’s Gospel Jesus tells the disciples, in detail, that He, the Son of Man, that is God incarnate, Immanuel, God with us,... He will be handed over

wrongly to the Jewish authorities, falsely tried and convicted, shamefully mistreated, and then delivered over to the Roman authorities, who could exact the death penalty, but before he would receive that horrid death by crucifixion, He would be mocked, spat upon and severely flogged! Yes, wait for it... wait for it... He would On-The-Third-Day Rise from the grave!

This is the essence of all that we will walk through starting next Sunday, through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, leading up to His Resurrection, and your resurrection!

This is the New Covenant, that is the New Last Will and Testament, the Trust Document, if you will, of the same Benevolent One who spoke from Sinai to Moses and who now comes to you here in beautiful Redlands some 4,000 years later!

Jesus cuts a New Covenant, but it is not where both parties are put “on the hook,” but where only God will be responsible for delivering the goods. Yes, you are declared to be His own.

But how? How can you be sure, be reassured that you are His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. How can we know that this is, indeed, “most certainly true.”?

Right here in our Gospel where the two Sons of Thunder, old man Zebedee’s boys, James and John come to Jesus just after He tells them that He alone must be denied and put to death, that He would destroy death through death, James and John ask to sit in His kingdom, one on His right, the other on His left!

You have to love this: Jesus will grant their request, but in a wonderful new way. Sitting on His right and on His left are two thieves. Jesus’ glory is your forgiveness! Let me say that again. Jesus’ glory is your forgiveness. The thief on the left, the unrepentant one. He condemns himself.

Ah, but the thief on the right, he stands in for James and John, and for you and for me, and every other son of Adam and daughter of Eve. Here on the Cross, with His own blood as the ink, Jesus signs His New Last Will and Testament.

James and John, along with all of us here, receive His sweet forgiveness in that amazing meal that sits on His Altar before you. BTW, your beloved Pastor calls this Altar one of his favorite places on earth. Here the God who not only cut the covenant but who fulfilled it on the Cross and delivered it to you through that empty Tomb, He feeds you with Himself – all so that you will know that the washing of regeneration you received in your Baptism is at work in you!

You are to be killed and raised with Him... in the Waters of His Baptism. This is the Baptism unto death... death and resurrection. You are given that, beloved. You are renewed in this Baptismal promise each time you confess. Each time you confess your sins you are also confessing your faith that “He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love!” (Joel 2:11)

Yes, and places in the Kingdom... we are not to lord over others, but to serve with the gifts God has given us as His beloved, cherished, redeemed and chosen ones, that others, too may know Him and the surpassing love His Last Will and Testament, His Trust has won for them also!

This New Last Will and Testament, this Trust has your name written in the Beneficiary Line for He loves you, even as John recorded in the encounter with Nicodemus who came to our Savior that night, ***For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that it would be saved... through Him!*** (John 3:16-17)

Another way of saying this is by the last Words of our Gospel, a fitting gift, that being so loved we may love others – for we are His own! You are freed to serve others because: ⁴⁵ ***“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”***

Even so, Amen and SOLI DEO GLORIA.

BGT **Mark 10:33-45:**³³ Ἦσαν δὲ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ἦν προάγων αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἐθαμβοῦντο, οἱ δὲ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἐφοβοῦντο. καὶ παραλαβὼν πάλιν τοὺς δώδεκα ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν ³³ ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ τοῖς γραμματεῦσιν, καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ³⁴ καὶ ἐμπαίξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν, καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.

³⁵ Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες αὐτῷ· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμέν σε ποιήσης ἡμῖν. ³⁶ ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί θέλετέ [με] ποιήσω ὑμῖν; ³⁷ οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· δὸς ἡμῖν ἵνα εἰς σου ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ εἰς ἐξ ἀριστερῶν καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου. ³⁸ ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω ἢ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι; ³⁹ οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· δυνάμεθα. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε, ⁴⁰ τὸ δὲ καθίσαι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἢ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ’ οἷς ἡτοίμασται. ⁴¹ Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. ⁴² καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· οἶδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν. ⁴³ οὐχ οὕτως δέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀλλ’ ὃς ἂν θέλῃ μέγας γενέσθαι ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, ⁴⁴ καὶ ὃς ἂν θέλῃ ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρῶτος ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος. ⁴⁵ καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακοινηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακοιῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.

GRADUAL

Heb. 12:2

[O come, let us fix our eyes on] | Jesus,*

the founder and perfecter | of our faith,

who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despis- | ing the shame,*

and is seated at the right hand of the | throne of God.

VERSE

Mark 10:45

Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.